1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

price at this time of year for nearly everything, including weddings and bride-wealth, goes up.

When all the exchanges are completed everyone participating in a wedding gets some present of money, food, and clothing. The *Iwuali,* especially at first marriages, gets the bulk of the bridewealth and distributes the rest to the girl's family both on her mother's and her father's side. After the first marriage the girl tends to keep more and more of the bridewealth for herself, giving the *Iwuali* what amounts to a fee for serving as the official bride-giver. It is also important to note that when there are disputes between a husband and wife, the first person to whom both turn for arbitration is the *Iwuali.*

The Kanuri think of getting married in several ways. First of all they divide all marriages into first marriages (to take a girl or a small girl), and secondary marriages with a divorced woman (to take a woman or to take a divorced woman). First marriages take place for a girl around the time of puberty, while boys do not marry until they are in their late teens or early twenties, and young men of twenty-eight and twenty-nine who have not yet been married are not hard to find.

An interesting sidelight on marriage with previously unmarried young girls is the ambivalence men feel about it. Men obtain much prestige from such a marriage. But its cost invariably puts a man into great debt, and consummation of the marriage itself, traditionally, is a semi-public affair in which old women related to the girl sit outside the marriage hut and whisper to their newly-wed relative that she must resist the advances of her husband. They do this until very late at night or until they are given some proof of the girl's virginity by the husband. They then make a fearful clatter in the town or village to announce the premarital chastity of their young relative. Standards of personal appearance and sexual attraction are important to Kanuri men and center on more sexually mature women. Such standards deal with hair style, facial symmetry, type of walk, and other physical attributes and skills, as well as ability at wifely chores. None of these attributes are in any degree well-developed among young girls, so that the man must control himself and almost publicly proclaim his manhood and sexual prowess with a young girl who is not defined as sexually exciting by the culture. This causes much anxiety and I have seen men praying almost continually for several weeks in order to gain the strength to carry out a virgin's consummation. It is important to note that when some western educated Kanuri talk about marriage they immediately fasten on this semi-public consummation of the girl's first marriage as a custom that will be dropped in the future, and certainly one they do not intend to carry out or even allow in their lives. From the girl's point of view, as education in western-style schools becomes more common and the length of time in school increases, then the time of first marriage for the girls will move ahead. At present however there are only a handful of Kanuri girls who attend schools beyond the age of traditional marriage.

But what is the basis for the conflict? Why are men willing to suffer to gain such an unattractive wife? Men always explain it in the same way. A young girl has never been touched sexually by other men; he is the first; he can train her as he likes, and teach her to be a proper wife to suit his own personal wishes. Besides, it is a good Muslim custom, they always add, as they do about almost every custom when they are asked. In this case they are correct, for such young marriages are very

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tinual dereliction of some duty although outright malfeasance such as stealing can also bring swift and awesome retribution. For example, a young boy was beaten for continually omitting to gather grass for his father's horse. This is a skill that a boy should acquire by the age of six or eight, possibly nine at the very latest. When punishment occurs its severity is noted by all children within earshot, and thus the beating of one child of the village or ward serves notice on all that punishment is not just a matter of threats but may become a reality if limits are transgressed.

That such household learning soon becomes habitual can be seen any day in a Bornu village by watching children. Even a little girl of three and a half can accomplish tasks involving quite a lot of dexterity. One little girl of this age was passed a straw mat plate and separately given some paper clips. She neatly put the paper clips on the plate and began her own already advanced imitation of the quick, deft, jiggling movements associated with the sifting of ground-nut shells. None of her paper clips was dropped, and she soon passed the plate back saying, "Here are some sifted ground nuts."

Sometimes play takes in both sexes and is more complex than simple imitation like the one above. Thus for several days a large group of young children from the age of five through ten may organize a "wedding." The "bride" and "groom" are chosen as are the various kindred, the best man, the leading woman, etc. Care is taken to practice as many of the details of the adult virgin wedding ceremony as they can manage including even a mock impregnation, in this case with a small doll. Wedding foods in miniature are passed around to the adults who accept the mock food with a show of seriousness although they may comment on or question some detail of the ceremony carried out mistakenly or omitted by the children. Adults expressed satisfaction with this type of play and remarked on its instructive value for the children. Such play is related to an even more complex form called *mai-mai*, which is no longer practiced in Bornu. In playing *mai-mai* the young children in a village put on a pageant. They chose a king, nobles, servants, slaves, wives, gave titles to everyone, and behaved for several days in the guise of these socio-political roles. Mock battles were fought, slaves taken and justice meted out in a mock court. Seniority was established by age and consent. The organization was temporary like the "wedding" and disbanded after a few days. During periods when adults are out of the compound, away at a market, or working in the fields during the growing season, children often play house. The group gets together and appoints "fathers," "wives," and "children." The little children may actually cook for their "husbands" on such occasions and the couples go into a hut in the compound where sexual play is carried on. They are, however, soon called back to the larger group where it has been declared "morning" by another child who has announced the "morning prayers" signifying that night has passed. Boys are aware that such play should stop when they can ejaculate. From then on they are men; sex is a serious affair and unmarried girls are illegitimate objects of sexual intercourse. However such prepubescent sex derived from playing "house" is widespread, or to paraphrase one young informant, "Everyone does such things when they are young."

Boys especially, but girls as well, may also begin some religious instruction during their childhood. Although girls never leave home for this purpose, boys sometimes do after the age of six or seven. In some cases the teacher lives nearby

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

and the boys go there to learn their prayers and the beginning of Islamic theology. In some cases, especially with girls, the instruction is taken in the household itself. During adolescence this training may become more serious, and boys who were not sent to live with their religious teachers before may go off to learn Islamic practices in greater detail. The relationship of a boy to his *mallam* or religious teacher is expressed in the saying, "Your mallam exceeds your father." In other words, a boy's religious instructor exceeds his father in fatherly qualities and he must be respected and obeyed as a superior whose authority is unquestioned.

Whether a child goes to live with his religious teacher or not, there are other important factors that maintain for him a high turn-over among household members that is in striking contrast to the norms of western society. No matter where he lives in Bornu there is a high divorce rate and the possibility that his mother and father will not live together all their lives is very great indeed. Children stay under the control of their father in his household, although some contact with the mother is maintained and remains a strong emotional bond for many, even though there is a constant possibility that it cannot remain a household relationship. High divorce also means that the mother's co-wives are continually changing and that one's own half-siblings may be without their own mother in the compound so that compound relationships themselves are continually shifting and changing throughout a person's childhood.

The Kanuri also practice fostering. In some cases children are given to grandparents, or friends, or other relatives to be raised. Sometimes the reasons are political, and the parents try to place the child in a very important person's household so that the child may grow up knowing and associating with people who can help him later on in life. Sometimes it is felt to be a kindness towards a friend or to the child's grandparents. Whatever the reason, the child lives during his early years in a compound other than that of his own parents. It is possible to find Kanuri who have lived in as many as four or five compounds by the time they reach adolescence, and two or three is quite common. On the other hand, there are also many people—especially in rural areas where their work is needed—who were raised in only one household. One informant reported how he was given to a father's younger brother at weaning, given to a religious teacher at six, returned to his father at the age of eight, then put into the household of the district head when he was thirteen. Although there is much variation in this practice, in conjunction with the high divorce rate as well as the always present possibility of sudden death by disease, it means again that the actual people in the younger person's relational network are many, many, times more fluid and changing than is the case in western society.

Summing up this very important point, we may say that it is a rare Kanuri who has passed through childhood with a stable set of interpersonal relations to siblings or adult members of his household. This means that in child training the relationships to specific persons are not stressed as much as the norms of behavior we spoke of in Chapter 3. The one important exception to this is the relationship to one's mother which is particularly strong between a mother and her son. This fits nicely into the life cycle of women who, as we shall see, usually return to their son later in their old age to take up the role of old, unmarried women. In stressing the norms of behavior rather than particular relationships, it is respect and obedience

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882 veloped physically had not yet married. There were many rumors and much gossip
883 to the effect that she was no longer a virgin and that men of the town slept with
581 her. Her father, it was said, would have a hard time arranging her first marriage.
156 The girl herself seemed to be suffering increasingly from her inability to see herself in the role of a child awaiting marriage instead of that of a developing young matron—the role now common among her young age mates. Thus in order to take up a normal position in society, girls are supposed to have their first marriages in and around the time of puberty. Failure to do so indicates a deviant and degrading development. This is the reason why almost all Bornu men say that girls who go on
883 in the educational system are "spoiled" and should never be allowed to stay in
882 school beyond the traditional age of marriage. The girls in school see the matter
871 differently; the situation remains today one of tension, with the majority against
578 education for girls, and the schools themselves looking for students and preaching a somewhat different attitude toward a girl's adolescence than that held traditionally by the people.

882 Another point should also be noted. Most girls have very little choice, if
883 any, in their first marriage arrangements. If they are very drastically opposed to the
584 union, their views are considered since parents are afraid they might behave badly as young wives. However they are traditionally supposed to respect the wishes of their parents and comply with their demands. Indeed many Kanuri, both men and women, know very little about their first marriage arrangements at all since these are almost entirely made by their parents or the head of the compound they are living in at the time. It should also be realized that many Kanuri girls marry for the first time with men sometimes as much as two, three, and even four times their own age which enhances the traditional seniority of the husband as well as taking any "romance" out of it for the girls.

881 Sometime around the end of childhood and into the beginning of the teen-
[304] age period young boys are circumcized. This event is fundamentally a ceremonial occasion and is thus related only in a rough general way to the actual onset of puberty for each boy. Generally speaking boys are cut in groups, although in rural areas it is not uncommon to see a family performing the ceremony for just one boy
[594] in the household. On the other hand circumcision among high-ranking people such as village heads, district heads, members of the royal family, or rich traders in the city attracts many other families who try to have their own children cut at the same time to participate in the large festivities. Usually the higher the rank of the leading families involved in a circumcision the greater the number of boys who are likely to be cut at the same time.

881 The important thing is not the readiness of the boy. Rather it is the auspi-
571 ciousness of the occasion in terms of the family's relationship to the rest of the community. Is there a large circumcision taking place this year? Are a large number of friends and relatives asking when little Abba Gana is going to be circumcized? Have the household members, especially the household head, attended a great many marriage or naming ceremonies? Have other community members been given gifts on these occasions? Is it not time to reap the benefit of all this participation by having a ceremony of one's own to which many people will come and bring gifts of food, clothing, and money for the family and the boy? These and similar questions are the determining factors in the timing of the circumcision ceremony, and

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

cattle have not broken into and eaten the produce, very little work is required in cultivating crops. Thus work on crop production is concentrated into less than six months leaving the rest of the year free for other activities.

Although almost all Kanuri households obtain some food and some cash from their farm plots, the amount of farming varies from person to person, from village to village, and even for the same person from season to season. In the city, many people have dropped farming and manage to earn enough cash income to furnish their needs from the market. In the villages some households, usually in areas of good soil and water supply, produce agricultural surpluses, while in other areas the farm work provides only part of the household needs. Again some farmers tend to produce fairly similar amounts of grain crops per year while others fluctuate, so that they produce practically nothing some years and large bounties a few years later. Increased prices of ground-nuts and guinea corn stimulate greater household farming activities while trade and other nonfarming activities may interfere with a man's farming. Sickness in the compound as well as blight and soil depletion tend to decrease agricultural proceeds, and finally in the rural areas increase or decrease in household size, especially in the number of wives, all tend to affect the fluctuation of crop proceeds from one household to another or within the same household over time. People who report themselves to be primarily farmers produce more than those who report themselves to be craftsmen, although for the Magumeri area the difference, when measured, does not seem to be very great. On the other hand, traders and political and religious specialists seem to produce approximately one quarter to one third as much on their farms as other people, and many in this category do not farm at all.

The importance of wives has already been noted. The number of wives available to any cultivator, as well as the number of his male subordinates in the household, is the major factor affecting crop production. The high divorce rate makes this primary source of labor somewhat unpredictable for each farmer. On the other hand it also helps to stabilize marriage. Thus the more men depend upon help from their wives the less likely they are to divorce them, although their efforts in this direction are never completely successful and the insecurity of farm help is always there. The insecurity can be alleviated by using sons or clients or laborers, all of whom require payment in some way for their help. All rural Kanuri at times help their neighbors, their relatives, or friends to farm and often a group of such men get together to help one another in a cooperative work gang and then reciprocate by helping each other in turn. Thus although many Kanuri do move around in Bornu, farming favors the most stable who can build up social relations in one place that can be utilized in the form of labor to offset the possible insecurity caused by the ever-present high divorce rate.

To make the situation more complicated many Kanuri are not rooted in the land emotionally. It is part of both the traditional and contemporary Kanuri conception of getting ahead in the world that personal advancement is not to be found in farming. Achievement in Bornu is seen as stemming out of profitable social relationships and more recently western schooling. If it is judged to be personally profitable for an individual to leave his farm work in order to become someone's client, there is little hesitation. Men asked me to take them on as clients and give them some money for trading purposes. They offered to travel anywhere in Bornu

665 178 Movement (BYM) has become a powerful force in Maiduguri where it elected both representatives in a direct election in 1956. This represented a serious blow to the traditional Kanuri ruling class, and is an indication of important changes in attitude toward traditional leadership in Kanuri culture. It is interesting to note that these changes have been occurring among the most acculturated segments of the population, in urban Maiduguri.

2. Education.

871 177 [872] Accompanying British rule, a general education system has been introduced in Bornu. Primary schools exist in all the larger towns, staffed by Kanuri teachers who speak English and have received some training as teachers. Of the school age 871 829 population only two to three per cent actually attend. Parents resist sending their children to the schools as they see little to be gained in school attendance, and the child, when sent to [792] school, is an economic loss to the family. They would rather send their children to Kanuri Malams, scholars of the Koran, where they are taught to pray, and to read the Koran by rote. If a child should show aptitude in such studies he would be encouraged to continue studying the Koran with important Malams. [554] Such study is considered more vital, more important, more prestigeful and ultimately more useful than study in the primary school.

871 Since attendance in the schools is to a certain extent

Since attendance in the schools is to a certain extent
871 compulsory, it is necessary at least for Village Heads and
555 District Heads to send their sons to school. In addition,
political advancement under the current system demands a cer-
[177] tain amount of education. Thus a paradox: it is necessary
[182] to accept certain non-Kanuri values, to be educated outside
of the traditional Kanuri system, in order to succeed in the
political system which has become incorporated as part of
463 Kanuri culture. Young men who are graduated from secondary
[874] school are trained as sanitation officers, agricultural as-
sistants, veterinary assistants, medical dispensers, hides
[554] and skins inspectors, clerks, and school-teachers. They func-
tion as a professional class, and they are called 'Malam', an
extension of the title given to a learned man which formerly
[871] meant a scholar of the Koran. The presence in a town of vet-
[555] erinary Malams and dispensary Malams, often the sons of Vil-
lage Heads or District Heads, provides a slight incentive to
ordinary villagers to send their sons to school, since these
Malams are salaried employees of the Native Authority. Often
the Malams themselves go into politics and seek appointments
as Village Heads or District Heads, following their fathers.
Thus they return to traditional leadership in the Kanuri com-
munity.

3. Economy.

433 Perhaps the greatest changes which have occurred in Bornu
439 Province are economic--Bornu today is part of the world. The

178 was. The changes noted above have made important inroads in
565 the social system. For many political appointments Western
[555] education has become a necessary requirement, and although many
[871] educated people still come from the aristocracy, commoners too
may become educated, may even excel in the schools and receive
jobs of political importance as a result of their scholastic ac-
[866] complishments. Along with modern education, election by direct
vote in the urban areas has allowed commoners to move directly
into politics, as members of the House of Assembly in Kaduna.
This has been of little significance until very recently, but
it represents a mechanism disruptive of the traditional social
system. Lastly, the newly risen wealthy class, of non-aristo-
cratic origin, has been able to take over, in some small measure,
characteristics of the aristocracy through the use of their
[556] wealth. Since they are able to afford to make the pilgrimage,
they benefit from the prestige accruing from being an Alhaji,
[662] They also benefit directly from giving money to political parties
and thereby gain political power.

178 The opening up of new avenues toward wealth, prestige, and
554 political power, the characteristics of the old aristocracy,
565 has resulted in an increasing number of individuals of commoner
family who have been able to achieve these goals. In recent
years such individuals have been rewarded by having important
[645] titles conferred on them by the Shehu. Members of the Shehu's
Council who did not come from aristocratic families have been
[431] granted noble titles. This process has been furthered by the

671 779 692 and here the spirit of the Koran is the guide to proper behavior.

[171] In the area of formal law, the Kanuri follow the same legal school prevalent throughout the Western Sudan--the Maliki legal school. Maliki law covers criminal law, rules of evidence, procedure, sentencing, property rights, contracts between individuals, law of marriage and divorce, inheritance and numerous other areas. Formal courts exist in Bornu, pre-
[683] sided over by Kanuri Alkalis, or judges. The Alkali begins his training, like so many Kanuri boys, by study of the Koran with a Malam. He completes his training, at present, in the Legal School at Kano. Islamic law in Northern Nigeria falls within the general area of "Native Law and Custom."

3. Education.

871 779 Education, as the Kanuri understand it, means studying the Koran. From about the age of six, both boys and girls are
[563] sent to a Malam to learn to pray. Every village has someone who can perform this minimum function, but only the towns have
[562] Malams. It is sufficient for a girl to memorize the prayers,
[565] and most boys proceed no further. However, parents who have greater aspirations for their sons, generally sons from upper class homes, will send their sons to live in the house of a Malam and study with him. Occasionally boys who show aptitude in their studies will be sent on to a more important Malam to
876 779 continue their studies. Under the tutelage of the Malam, the

876 779 pupils learn to recite suras (chapters) of the Koran by rote. If they should proceed to higher studies they learn to write 875 in Arabic script. Anyone who can recite the Koran and can write Arabic characters is qualified to be a Malam[1]. Prom- [555] inent Malams may be appointed Imams and Alkalis. However, to reach such heights requires years of study of Koranic texts, ritual and of law.

[554] The title of "Malam" signifies respect for the learning achieved by that individual. A Malam who teaches pupils, how- [431] ever, is not recompensed by direct payment. Rather, his pupils [735] bring gifts to him, and his pupils beg for him. The giving of sadaka noted above takes the form of gifts given directly to the Malam on ceremonial occasions, and gifts given to his pupils [577] who beg in his name. Many adult Kanuri men of wealth and so- [554] cial importance stress piety and continue their Koranic studies.

• 871 779 177 554 The identification of learning and education with the study of Koran tends to inhibit the growth and expansion of secular education on a Western model, since Kanuri parents see the schools as conflicting with the Koranic Malam, and since study of the Koran earns such high prestige (though little remuneration).

4. Social Organization.

779 593 Islam places particular emphasis on the nuclear family. As

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1. Trimingham, ibid., p. 81.

634 dam once again, it is evident that one group is a modern group
178 177 which has no counterpart in traditional Kanuri society. This
554 is a group of NA appointees including the Primary School Headmaster and the three school teachers, the Agricultural expert, the Veterinary, the Hides and Skins Inspector, the Forestry expert, the Local Government Advisor, the Adult Education Organ- [191] izer, the Dispenser, and the Sanitation Inspector. All of these • [871] individuals have been educated in Western schools, most through [963] secondary school, and all speak some English. They have all received specialized training for their jobs. In addition, all are young men or young adult men. Because they have all been educated, they are addressed as "Malam," an extension of the term for a Koranic scholar to new areas of scholarship. (They will be referred to henceforth as "NA Malams".)

634 177 554 565 871 Despite the fact that the use of the term Malam indicates a general recognition of their scholarly attainments, the NA Malams are a part of the political system, under the jurisdiction of the Ajia. Most of the NA Malams in Geidam are sons of Lowans or Ajias, or have some direct connection with the household of a Lowan or Ajia. This is because the aristocracy and those in political power have been more likely to send their [829] sons to school than the talaka. Talaka are loath to send their children to the Western school as they are needed at home to assist in farming, and because parents see nothing to [555] be gained by sending one's child to the school. Lowans, however, are themselves pressured to set a good example, and they

634 see that, in order to succeed politically in future years, a
• 871 school education is an advantage since the youngster learns to
555 speak English, and learns enough of the ways of the Englishman
177 to better himself. Thus the group of NA Malams that has emerged
565 derives from the aristocracy or from minor political official-
554 dom. Their goals are commensurate with their social background;
all hope some day to be appointed Lowan or Ajia, or to achieve
political power by gaining a post in Maiduguri. As a group,
therefore, they belong within the political structure, though
their roles are not specifically political. Their aspirations
are the traditional Kanuri aspirations toward political power
[178] and social prestige. However, the means to obtain power which
is represented by the NA Malams is newly emergent in Kanuri so-
ciety.

E. Religion at the Communal Level.

128 Religious practice among the Kanuri does not differ from
76 community to community. Therefore, in discussing the manifesta-
[184] tions of religion in the community of Geidam, it will not be
necessary to describe Islamic observances, such as the ritual
128 prayer. The present discussion will be limited to two areas:
79 religious specialists and their place in the social system of
[185] Geidam; and religious festivals as they are celebrated at the
community level.

177 voted to production for export today than during any previous
439 period. The roles of those involved in this external trade
433 with the Western world have changed profoundly as this aspect of Kanuri economy grew in importance in this century.

177 Goods imported into Geidam from Western centers have
439 also affected Kanuri culture. The large quantities of cloth,
463 which represent the most important item imported, have brought
433 about the disappearance of Kanuri weaving and thus have led
[286] to the elimination of one craft group, the weavers. Other crafts have been affected to a lesser extent by the importation of other manufactured goods (enamelware, buckets, rubber shoes) but the craftsmen as a group have continued to make and sell their products and services, without any direct influence from Western culture.

177 In similar fashion, the Geidam market shows only slight
439 signs of the effects of contact with the West, and those en-
441 gaged in trade within the market-place are little affected
443 by the contact. This is in sharp contrast to tradesmen who are involved in external trade, where the effects of contact are pronounced. Those most involved are the canteen traders who deal directly with the European trading companies in Gei-
[555] dam. As a result of their success in dealing with agents of the Western world, they have become an important and wealthy group in the community.

177 Lastly, Western education has had its effect on social
• 871 stratification. Though individuals in Geidam who have received

177 Western education are few in number, they form a significant
871 category in the community. In their most advanced form they
632 are represented by the class of NA Malams, who are best categorized as a group which functions primarily as part of the
177 political structure. Since traditional formal education was
871 entirely in the hands of the Koranic Malams, this area of in-
554 fluence affects them most directly. Learning in Kanuri culture has always been associated with prestige, and the most learned people were also among the most respected. This is true for Koranic Malams, and is also true, to an extent, for those who receive a Western education since they, too, are
578 referred to as "Malam." As a result of this, a conflict has arisen concerning the two forms of education, and the rela-
177 tive merits of each. However, since Western-educated indi-
871 viduals who continue their education and receive specialized
632 training tend to accept NA positions--so that the best educated individuals in Geidam are all NA Malams--the primary activities of Western-educated Kanuri are associated with the political system. Therefore they are not in conflict with those, such as the scholars of the Koran, who are concerned primarily with religion. Rather, they threaten individuals who, through traditional associations, are involved in the political system but have received little or no Western education.

177 It is evident from the above discussion that contact with
178 the Western world has created new paths to wealth, power, and
554
565

[SEIDAN]

*177 212 *463 *554 *565 But in every one of the eight groups there is at least one individual who can write a little in Arabic script. Most of the Kabuna, Craftsmen, and Low-status Individuals can neither write in Arabic script nor in English script. However, several of the Talaka can write a little at least in Arabic script.

*177 *871 212 565 634 The two types of script divide the two educational systems which operate side by side among the Kanuri. English script is taught in the schools; Arabic script is taught by the Malams. Those who have had some extended contact with the Western schools (the NA Malams and the Aristocracy) can write in English script. Those who have studied with a Malam can write in Arabic script. Individuals who fall in this latter category are found in all of the eight groups, and several are among the Talaka. It is noteworthy that the NA Malams, who all write in English script, can also write in Arabic script.

*177 405 *565 *634 Table XVIII presents data on the possession of Western material goods. The first column compares those who own, or have owned a wrist watch. All six NA Malams and 4 of the Aristocrats owned a wrist watch at the time that they were asked. Though a number of individuals in the lower class groups, particularly in the Talaka group, have at one time owned a wrist watch, none owns one at present. This of course reflects the wealth differences among the groups. An individual Talaka may own a wrist watch for a short time, until he finds that he needs cash and sells it to some one else. Members of the NA Malam group and the Aristocracy are sufficiently wealthy to

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 258]

[GEIDAM]

735 178 441 *565 431 bear the Aristocrat's wrath if they approach him with a ridiculous request for charity. The manner in which the Canteen Operator wishes to present himself is not as well known and his relation to others, a changing relationship as he grows more wealthy, is not as clearly defined. Many more people will approach him with requests, to test the limits of his generosity since these are not yet widely known. Should he be somewhat erratic in his manner of giving, this would encourage others to approach him and try their luck. In response to this tendency on the part of others, the group of Canteen Operators would be expected to place various conditions on giving gifts to others. They might be expected to be overly cautious in investigating the credentials of those who come to them for charity. [577] Furthermore, since generosity is an important Kanuri value, they might also be very sensitive to criticisms that they are misers (_loku_), thus their patterns of charitable giving might indeed be erratic, encouraging others to continue to test the limits of their generosity. It is, therefore, in terms of the status and role of the Canteen Operators that their behavior in this area can best be interpreted.

*177 *871 *829 562 Another area in which behavior and attitudes involving acculturation can be tested is that of education. Traditional Kanuri education has been described above, and the efforts of the British in the area of education have also been related. Table XXX gives the responses of individuals in the sample to the question of whether they would send their son and their

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 299]

Table XXX

21, 28. **Education:** Would send your son to school?
Would you send your daughter to school?

	Son:		Daughter:	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Aristocracy	5	-	5	-
Koranic Malams	-	3*a	-	3
Canteen Operators	5	1*b	4	2
NA Malams	6	-	5	1
Kabuna	6*c	-	5	1*g
Craftsmen	4	2	4	2
Talaka	5*d	3	3*h	5
Low-status Individuals	1	3*e	2	2
Totals:	32	12*f	28*i	16*j

Son:

*a Koranic Malam: "No. I want my son to become Liman after me."

*b Canteen Operator: "No. I will do according to our custom. I will do what my father and father's father did."

*c Kabuna: "I would send my son to school. I wish that I had been sent to school, but my father forbid it."

*d Talaka: "Yes. It's useful. But a girl won't stay in her husband's house if she goes to school."

*e One low-status individual has a son in school, but if the Lowan had said nothing he would not have sent him to school himself.

*f 8 of the 12 who answered "no" specifically stated that they would not send their son to school unless forced to do so by their Lowan.

[GEIDAM]

Table XXX (continued)

Daughter:

*g One kabuna sent his daughter to school, but only because the Ajia told him to send her. He would not otherwise have sent her to school.

*h Talaka: "I would send her. If you have no money you can't do anything for your daughter. If she goes to school, she later will earn a salary and will give you food when you're old."

*i Four respondents said: "School is more useful," or "School opens the mind."

*j 8 of the 15 who answered "no" specifically stated that they would not send their daughter to school unless forced to do so by the Lowan.

daughter to the Western school. Most (73 per cent) would send their sons to school, and the reasons for doing so (*c, *d) stress the usefulness of Western schooling and the benefits to be gained. 27 per cent said that they would not send their sons to school, a number adding "unless forced to do so by the Lowan" (see *f). Four groups would overwhelmingly send their sons to school. These are: Aristocracy, Canteen Operators, NA Malams, Kabuna. The remaining four are divided, although none of the Koranic Malams and only one Low-status Individual would send a son to the Western school.

Fewer would send a daughter to school, though once again a majority (64 per cent) state that they would. The Aristocracy, NA Malams and Kabuna would overwhelmingly send a daughter to school (though one individual in each of the latter groups has shifted from a "yes" for a son to a "no" for a daughter). The Koranic Malams remain adamant and would no sooner send a daughter than they would a son. Whereas a majority of Talaka would send a son to school, most would not send a daughter to school. The reasons given for sending a daughter to school appear in *h and *i. Of the 15 who answered "no", 8 added "unless forced to do so by the Lowan" (see *j). One Talaka noted (*d) that school was useful for a boy, but not for a girl because marriage difficulties arise for educated women. This issue will be discussed more fully in Table XXXVI which concerns marriage with an educated woman.

In following up the choice involved in educating one's son,

[GEIDAM]

Members of the sample were asked: would you send your son to a Koranic Malam or to the European school (Table XXXI)? Twenty-two (50 per cent) chose the European school; 14 (32 per cent) chose the Koranic Malam; 8 (18 per cent) chose some combination of the two. Among the reasons advanced for sending one's son to school are the following: he can learn to pray, learn Arabic, and read the Koran in school (*a- half of those who chose school specifically added this, indicating that they considered these things to be important but that they thought they could also be accomplished in the European school); students have to work in the school - *c (a questionable assumption); school opens the mind, one learns the ways of the world there; it is a way to earn money, many trades become possible through schooling (*d); if he goes to school, "Everything will come to him" (*e). The last response may be compared with that of a craftsman (*f) explaining why he would rather send his son to a Koranic Malam: "He would learn to pray, and learn to count prayer beads, and will get whatever he wants." Six people offered a compromise, stating that they would first send their son to a Koranic Malam, and after he had learned to pray they would then send him to the European school. One Aristocrat (*h) chose a different compromise solution, and a Low-status drummer offered a very individualistic answer (*h).

In answering this question, three groups (Aristocracy, NA Malams, and Kabuna) remained consistent with their answers to the two previous questions. They would all send their son to

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 303]

[BEIDAM]

Table XXXI

29. Education: would you send your son to a Koranic Malam or to the European school?

	European school	first to Malam then to school	Koranic Malam	Neither (or both)
Aristocracy	4*a	-	-	1*b
Koranic Malams	-	-	3	-
Canteen Operators	1*c	3	2	-
NA Malams	5*d	1	-	-
Kabuna	5*e	1	-	-
Craftsmen	3	-	3*f	-
Talaka	3	1	4*g	-
Low-status Individuals	1	-	2	1*h
Totals:	22	6	14	2

*a Aristocrat: "When I was young I was sent to a Malam, and then sent to school. I would send my son straight to school. He would learn prayer and everything there."

11 of the 22 who would send their son to school specifically added that he could learn the Koran, Arabic, and prayer in school.

*b Aristocrat: "Both. I would send one son to school, and one to the Malam."

*c Canteen Operator: "The Koran is better, but they don't really read there (at the Malam's). In school they have to read, so I would send him to school."

*d NA Malams: "School. He would learn everything there, Koran and Arabic. It would open his mind."

"To school. He would learn Arabic in school; he would learn the ways of the world."

"School. If he studies the Koran, he won't have any money, and he'll become a thief."

"School. He'll grow up and have many possible trades when he leaves school."

[BEIDAM]

Table XXXI (continued)

*177 *e Kabuna: "School. This is the era for European knowledge."
• 871
*829 "School is better. When I grow old my children will earn a salary and support me if they go to school. A Malam of the Koran has nothing."
*565
*554 "School. European knowledge is more useful these days."
*463 "School is very useful. Everything will come to him."

*f Craftsman: "Koranic Malam. He would learn to pray, and learn to count prayer beads, and will get whatever he wants."

*g Talaka: "Malam of the Koran. If a son reads the Koran, his father's sins will disappear."

*h Low-status Individual: "Neither. I want my son to be a drummer."

177 school, or work out a compromise; none would send a son solely
871 to the Malam. The Koranic Malams also remained consistent
829 with their previous answers. None would send a son to any one
[545] but a Koranic Malam. The Low-status group would tend to send
[639] their sons to the Koranic Malam, as they indicated in their an-
[554] swers to the previous question. The remaining three groups (Canteen Operators, Craftsmen, and Talaka) are fairly evenly divided between the two choices. All three groups appear to have shifted somewhat from their answers in Table XXX, and lean more in the direction of the Koranic Malam than they indicated earlier. The Canteen Operators in particular appear to have shifted in the direction of a compromise solution, and three of the six individuals who answered in this way are to be found among the Canteen Operators.

829 Another revealing area is that of the various occupations
554 which individuals would like. Some are realistic aspirations,
441 while others, particularly in the case of older people, border on fantasy. Eight categories have been distinguished in Table XXXII. Of these, the category of Trader (column 2) is the most popular by far. This is listed separately from "trading in the market-place" (column 3) because in the latter case individuals specifically indicated that they saw themselves as petty traders who operated in the market-place. The two categories might, however, be considered as one, since both are involved in the same general sort of activity--trade. Considered together, 42 per cent of the sample selected trade as the desired occupa-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 3971]

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est of a very highly taxed District.[1] The net result was a high turn over in chiefs both at the District and village level, through the utilisation by the British of their powers of deposition of chiefs, and a continuation of Kanuri rather than British concepts of taxation.

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In 1914, a new Resident took over the province and began to strengthen the Emirate political structure at its center.[2] He instituted a Shehu's council with a Wasiri as its head, and issued instructions that no European officer was to give direct instructions to District Heads. All directives were to be made through the Shehu and his council. This council, starting originally with two members, grew steadily in size and function. By the late 1940's it resembled a kind of local cabinet with the Wasiri as its head under the titular headship of the Shehu and with each member having at least one portfolio. That is to say, the members of this Council have come more and more to function as the heads of civil service departments.

All African political organisation, both traditional and introduced, was called the Native Administration by Lugard and his followers and the Emirate departments of works, forestry, education, veterinary services, etc., were dubbed the N.A. departments, for that particular Emirate. This distinguished them from the government provincial departments who administered and guided the policies and actions of all the N.A.'s in the province.

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The newly introduced European governmental services demanded some degree of western education and trained clerks from other parts of Nigeria were brought into Bornu to fill the host of small jobs which were necessary to a growing administration.

(1) In the Mobber, Geidam, Magumeri and Nganzai District Notebooks, notations have been made throughout the colonial period of complaints by peasants who reported that they had moved from one district to another because of excessive taxation.

(2) In 1914, the British swiftly and with little opposition took over the German Cameroons, half of which were ceded to them after the War.

175 necessary to a growing administration. In Bornu, a provincial school
• 871 was set up in Maiduguri in 1915 with eleven pupils which taught Hausa and Kanuri (using English script) and arithmetic.(1) Muslim religious knowledge and Arabic were also made part of the curriculum, while English did not come in until somewhat later. By 1916 there were 74 pupils all drawn from the ranks of the aristocracy.

According to the opinion of contemporary officials who have worked in several areas of northern Nigeria, European education in Bornu is far behind that of any other province in the region. Certainly most of the schools that can be seen today are usually less than 10 years old, so that education in the European sense of the word has only recently been made available in any appreciable extent to the people of Bornu. Today each District has at least one small elementary school and the provincial secondary school has been enlarged.
175 This dearth of western educated personnel has brought to Bornu many
871 outsiders to fill the necessary jobs which the European and his record-
167 keeping culture and technology require. Due to over-population and a much longer tradition of western education in their own area, a large number of these have been Ibo people from southeast Nigeria.

175 In 1907 the British plan to rebuild the old 19th century
361 capital of Kuka was abandoned due to the extreme aridity of the local
[132] area, and the capital was henceforth situated at Maiduguri on the Alo river basin. Kuka soon dwindled in size and became a rural village.
175 On the other hand, the new capital which had previously had a fairly
369 large market could not produce enough grain to feed the suddenly ex-
433 panded population which flowed in when it became the center of the
178 Emirate. It was therefore found necessary from 1907 to 1914 to force

(1) Annual Report Bornu Province; 1915

794 793 mitted to as a superior whose authority is unquestioned. In other cases, mallams near at hand or in the compound take up the job and the child is not forced to leave home. Today there is the added possibility of receiving religious instruction in the government schools. However, this is still rare in rural areas.

591 By the age of ten or twelve years, a young Kanuri boy may have lived in quite a number of households. One informant related how he was adopted by his grandfather at weaning, given to a wandering mallam at the age of six, entered Junior Primary School as a boarder at nine, and entered the service of a District Head at the age of thirteen. This is not an extreme case, especially when the high rate of divorce is considered. Thus a young boy or girl, especially the former, can find himself in one to five or more different households or primary 591 571 group settings by the time he has reached early adolescence. It may be proper here to ask who is the authority figure in the young child's life; who is it that in his person embodies or symbolizes authority? And the answer is of fundamental importance —— no one. The Kanuri child learns, whether he lives in one compound or many, that his society is a system of ranked hierarchies in which there are many people to whom he must give respect and subordination.

Puberty

561 By the end of childhood, as the Kanuri define it (which means somewhere between the ages of nine to thirteen), the sex roles and many of their accompanying behaviours have been established. From this period onward the development towards adult status is sharply dif- 881 582 ferentiated for males and females. Somewhere around puberty a young girl is given in virgin marriage by her father or the person who has been designated as having the power of marriage dispensation over her. Male

000 come progressively remote from their own.

548 [369] Exceptions to the normal pattern occur. In some cases the girls become prostitutes (alangnoma), although this is more common in the urban areas where there is less visibility and higher demand for this stigmatized occupation. In Magumeri village, there was one active prostitute of whom it was said she had never been properly married. 589 Another young woman of about eighteen to twenty years had not as yet been married. In 1956, she was still wearing the small girls' hair style, which she finally changed in 1957 to that of an adult woman. Her slightly sub-normal intelligence was socially recognized, and to this characteristic was attributed her inability to obtain a husband. She was, by 1957, trying to identify herself as a zower, i.e. a divorced woman. That is to say, she declared herself openly available sexually to all males. Informants claimed that her chances of finding a husband were exceedingly slim. Another girl of fourteen or fifteen had already passed puberty and was unmarried. Rumour and gossip ran around that she was not a virgin, i.e. adult men had slept with her, and it was said that her father would have a very difficult time ever finding a husband who would take her as wife. The child seemed to be suffering increasingly from her inability to identify herself as a girl awaiting marriage or as a developing young woman which all her agemates had by now become.

885 582 871 These exceptions exemplify a basic precept of Kanuri culture. In order to obtain a normal status in the society a female must have had a first marriage in or around the time of puberty. Failure to do so inhibits her achievement of respectable adult status. This is one of the primary reasons why European Secondary education for Kanuri girls receives so much opposition from the local population. The idea

885 582 871 of any institutional prolongation of a girl's unmarried status beyond puberty is regarded by the people as leading to the ruin of her normal development as it is conceived in the culture. (This opposition is also exacerbated by the fear of a loss of power of dispensation over the girl by her guardian when she attends school).

881 304 For young boys the end of childhood and the beginning of adolescence is marked by circumcision. It is apparent from the variation in age, running anywhere from seven to twelve years for the circumcision of boys, that physiological maturation has very little to do with the timing of the ceremony for any particular boy. The boy's family, especially the head of the household (usually his father), decides the issue on the basis of family readiness to perform the ceremony. Often a large group of boys, sometimes as many as thirty or forty in large towns, are cut when a leading family performs a circumcision for one of its members.

The important thing for the Kanuri is not the readiness of any particular young boy for the ceremony in terms of either his behavioural or physiological development. The deciding factor is the auspiciousness of the occasion in terms of the family's relationships with the rest of the community. Is there a large circumcision taking place this year? Have a lot of friends and relatives been asking repeatedly when little Aba is going to be circumcised? Have the household members, especially the head, attended a great many marriages, naming ceremonies, etc., of other community members and given gifts on these occasions? Is it now time to reap the benefit of all that participation by having a ceremony of one's own, to which many people will come and many gifts of goods and money will be obtained? These

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 M814 Kanuri M814

000 555 in Bornu, itself, by Kanuri. It is recognised, especially in the
871 upper ranks of society and among the urban masses, that some western education is a prerequisite for successful advancement in political offices and in the civil service in general. Because the government educational system is not entirely controlled by the existing Kanuri office-holders it has proved to be a method of recruitment into high status positions that allows for a certain measure of social mobility.(1) One informant, the eldest son of a deceased District Head, is related to the royal family of Bornu. His fondest wish is to be appointed some day to the position of District Head which he feels is his birthright. But he has no formal western education, knows very little Hausa, and therefore has very little chance of ever achieving this aspiration.

463 571 With the expansion of all governmental services since the end of World War II, there has developed a large group of young civil servants, all of them western educated to some extent, and in varying degrees, who are referred to by the local British as "the mallams" or "the young mallams".(2) They are the clerks, agricultural field assistants, teachers, sanitary inspectors, veterinary assistants, 571 [212] medical dispensers, etc. They read newspapers in Hausa and English, own radios, wrist watches, socks, European made shoes, bicycles, and

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871 563 (1) That there is still much control exerted is illustrated by the school-boy population in Maiduguri which was used for questionnaire purposes by the writer. Of the 168 boys in the secondary and the senior primary schools, 21 were of the Babur tribe; of the 21 Babur boys, only two were (by their own admission) in the secondary school, while 19 were in the senior primary. The Kanuri majority has less control over the students from the districts who are chosen to attend the central urban senior primary school than they do over who is to receive promotion from senior primary to secondary school. In such a discriminatory atmosphere, many non-Kanuri youngsters change their names to more Kanuri-sounding ones.

(2) cf. Leith-Ross, S., The Development of a Middle Class in the Federation of Nigeria. Paper delivered at the 29th Session of the International Institute of Differing Civilizations in London, September 1955.

554 602 [156] lower level. A high born, successful chief explained the improper, disreputable behaviour of another chief by claiming that this sort of thing was not surprising behaviour from the son of a slave. At the peasant level, birth status can count as well in raising or lowering an individual in the eyes of his fellows. A man is given higher status because his father is rich or is a powerful Koranic mallam, while it may be whispered of another that his mother was a pagan, or his father was a blacksmith, thus lowering his status in the eyes of others.

565 602 554 As in most complex stratified societies, birth in Bornu into any one level determines to a large measure what range up or down of status positions an individual is likely to achieve in his lifetime.(1) There is a much higher chance that high status positions are occupied by the sons of high status persons rather than the sons of peasants. [178] Western education and the plethora of jobs opening up is latterly creating [648] a more widely mobile society, but it was British policy at the beginning of the colonial period to educate the sons of chiefs. The advantages of this policy were soon perceived by the leaders of the society. [271] Consequehtly, a large proportion of the young western educated group are [369] sons of the traditional political leaders. There is no conflict over this tendency from the rural population, who still do not value western education very highly, although rumblings of resentment are heard in the large urban centre. 565 463 602 At the peasant level many of the craft workers in Magumeri, the potters, dyers, blacksmiths, calabash makers and the other craftsmen, are from kin groups that have engaged in these industries "duk" (right back through time), for as long as any of them can remember. However, except for the potters (females) and blacksmiths,

(1) cf. Lipsett, S.M. and Bendix, R., Social Mobility and Occupational Career, American Journal of Sociology Vol. LVII (March 1952) pp. 494-504.

632 571 If the Lawan moves to another town, or is dismissed, the persons who are his tada move with him, while his tala (peasants) wait patiently for a new Lawan to collect taxes and to settle their disputes.

632 871 Wisely, the Lawan's son in Magumeri stays out of any active leadership role in his father's organization. His job as the adult education (literacy) organizer for the District of Magumeri, keeps him travelling much of the time and he never interferes with the political organization which he may one day inherit. During the entire period of the field trip he was never once observed taking any role of power and authority towards any of his father's followers, all of whom treated [554] him with deference. His father is one of the few enthusiastic supporters of adult education and enforces its innovation quite vigorously in his own jurisdictional area, since he knows that this will raise his son's political respectability in the Bornu N.A.(1)

632 423 [622] All land use rights in the village area except hereditary usufruct are vested in the Lawan. However, dispensation of land use rights can, in practice, be carried out by Hamlet Heads within the hamlet boundaries, although all such decisions must be cleared with Lawan 632 before their final validation. The Lawan is also approached and told of all land rentals which he witnesses. As noted before he is paid a fee for witnessing marriages and ratifying divorces, and he hears and tries disputes involving his peasants. Indeed most peasants feel more secure about any decisions they have made affecting their neighbours

[208] (1) The Magumeri Village Area peasants are nevertheless not responding very keenly to adult education. They find Lawan's enthusiasm for literacy rather confusing, since one of the main propaganda themes given to innovators by the N.A. (designed by the British) is the alleged skill that literacy gives the peasants in ascertaining whether or not their tax receipts actually correspond to their payments. The fact that it is the Lawan who taxes them - and overtaxes them they believe - and he as well who prods them to learn to read, is one reason why they are mistrustful of the literacy campaign.